

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 298
By DeBerry L

A RESOLUTION To express the sense of the General Assembly in support of a Women's Health Platform that recognizes the need for elimination of serious inequities in the treatment and prevention of illness in women.

WHEREAS, The government of the State of Tennessee can increase its support for women's health and can make a difference in improving the status of women's health; and

WHEREAS, Women are different, metabolically, hormonally and physiologically, from men and have different patterns of health and disease, and some diseases are more common in women than in men; and

WHEREAS, Women are more likely to suffer from chronic diseases; more than one in five women have some form of cardiovascular disease, and one in two women will have an osteoporosis-related fracture in her lifetime; and

WHEREAS, Women are three times more likely to develop rheumatoid arthritis and two to three times more likely to suffer from depression; and

WHEREAS, Women are less often referred for diagnostic tests and less often treated for heart disease as compared to men; and

WHEREAS, Women, if they are smokers, are 20-70 percent more likely to develop lung cancer and ten times more likely than men to contract HIV during unprotected sex; and

WHEREAS, Women outnumber men three to one in long-term care facilities; and

WHEREAS, Women are much more likely to provide health care to family members and make health care decisions and women spend two of every three health care dollars; and

WHEREAS, There is abundant evidence that women are under-treated compared to men and under-represented in women's health care studies; and

WHEREAS, While there has been some national attention on women's health issues, and some legislative activity by the Congress on access issues, there remains little change in vitally important preventive care and treatment issues; and

WHEREAS, In a recent survey of voters, almost 80 percent of women and 60 percent of men favored a Women's Health Care Platform which supports relevant care, relevant research and relevant education for women; and

WHEREAS, Nine out of ten men and women agree that women have the right to access quality treatment and should have access to the latest technologies and appropriate diagnostic tests; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That it is the sense of this General Assembly that every state agency and state institution of higher learning and every recipient of state grants or state funding will take appropriate action to achieve improved and equal access for women to quality health care, including:

- Providing women with equal access to quality health care, including state-of-the-art medical advances and technology;

- Increasing the number of women covered by comprehensive health care insurance, including primary and preventive health care for all women;
- Preventing serious health problems by timely diagnosis and treatment programs;
- Promoting strategies to increase patient access to recommended diagnostic and screening tests, preventive health regimens and recommended treatments;
- Encouraging unimpeded access to women's specialty health providers;
- Creating and promoting public/private partnerships to create programs designed to improve the scope and quality of women's health care;
- Improving communications between providers and patients;
- Continuing to expand participation of women in clinical trials;
- Increasing government and private research on women's health issues and the differences between men and women and how such differences impact quality health care;
- Conducting more health outcomes research to demonstrate the value of women's health care interventions and preventive health measures in both the long- and short-term;
- Expanding medical and nursing school curricula in the area of women's health, including education in gender biology;
- Supporting public education campaigns to increase women's awareness about their unique health risks, and to teach women how to negotiate the complexities of today's health care system and how to demand and obtain the best care available;
- Conducting public health campaigns via state and local departments of public health with private sector partners to focus on key women's preventive health issues;

- Urging the establishment of permanent offices of women's health within state government to raise awareness of women's special health care needs and advocate initiatives to address them;
- Fostering development and dissemination of publicly available information on the quality of health care and health outcomes that improve women's ability to choose the best women's health care plan; and
- Expanding state screening programs targeted at lower-income women to include a full range of known risk factors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we commend Women In Government for its leadership and enterprise in bringing to this state the appropriate urgency of need and meaningful steps that can be taken to attain the improved and equal access for women to quality health care, technologies and treatments; education of researchers about gender differences; and unimpeded access to women's health providers.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.